

# **Manufacturing Innovation Fund Advisory Board**

## ***December Meeting Minutes***

### **Department of Economic and Community Development**

December 8, 2016

9:00 AM - 10:35 AM

505 Hudson Street

Hartford, Connecticut

#### **Attendance**

- Board Members: Catherine Smith, Colin Cooper, Don Balducci, Beverlee Dacey, John Harrity, John Zoldy, Todd Pihl
- Board Members via Phone: Chris DiPentima, Bryan Garcia
- Quorum: Yes
- Stakeholders: Bernice Zampano, Tracey Ariel, Bonnie DelConte, Kathy Marioni, Paul Striebel, Rich Pearson, Todd Berch, Commissioner Scott Jackson, Eric Brown
- DECD Staff: Carmen Molina-Rios, Barbara Fernandez, Toni Karnes, George Norfleet, Susan Chen
- Guest Presenter: Jill Adams

#### **Minutes**

Meeting called to order by Chair Commissioner Catherine H. Smith at 9:01a.m.

1. **Call to Order:** A quorum of directors was present. Commissioner Smith welcomed the board, introductions were made, and the meeting proceeded with business.
2. **Approval of November 14 meeting minutes** – Mr. Harrity moved to accept the November minutes. Seconded by Mr. Cooper Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Manufacturing Voucher Program** – Paul Striebel presented statistics on the program status, progress, and survey responses to date. He recommended the following changes to the program:
  - Raise the threshold for the minimum number of full time employees an applicant should have at the time of application to three;
  - Reduce the maximum award from \$50,000 to \$30,000 per company;
  - Eliminate training as an eligible use of funds.

After discussion, it was agreed to revise program eligibility to include 3 full time employees as the minimum number at time of application, to keep the maximum award at \$50,000, and to allow training only if associated with and necessary for the purchase of machinery and equipment. Commissioner Smith called for a vote on the program changes and the budget

presented. Mr. Harrity moved to approve the program recommended changes and the \$4,695,271 budget for the Manufacturing Voucher Program. Motion was seconded by Mr. Zoldy. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Marketing Plan** – Jill Adams, President and principal owner of Adams & Knight, Inc., a public relations and marketing company, presented the strategic marketing plan for the Manufacturing Innovation Fund. She identified the main key objectives and audiences, and the overall strategy and tactics. She noted that the plan included ongoing public relations and outreach to key influencers, a video series featuring current young professionals, a paid social media campaign to reach emerging talent, and a promotional flyer to be shared with Connecticut manufacturers. She also noted that all recommend strategies would point toward a single MIF web presence. Ms. Adams presented a budget totaling \$200,600. After some discussion, Mr. Zoldy moved to approve the marketing plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harrity. Motion passed unanimously.
5. **MIF Annual Report** –Ms. Fernandez updated the Board on what will be included in the annual report, such as the MIF accomplishments, the summary data and statistics, the financial portfolio, and testimonials. She advised that DECD will send drafts to the Board members this month by email, and she requested that all Board members provide timely turnaround to the requests for comments, as the annual report is due to the General Assembly not later than January 1, 2017.
6. **Workforce Development** – Mr. Harrity gave an update on the Committee’s Apprenticeship Program. First, he noted that there was an error and that a vote was required to correct the math on the previously submitted budget. Mr. Harrity moved for the correction to be approved. Seconded by Mr. Balducci. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Harrity re-introduced the recommendation to allow for pre-apprenticeships in the program. He noted its benefit for the students as it would allow for them to simultaneously participate in the required education and training and also participate part time in a pre-apprenticeship opportunity. Thus, allowing the training and part-time apprenticeship hours to be transferable to a full-time apprenticeship. After some discussion, the group agreed the program should have a maximum cap of 8 total apprentices. The total number could be comprised of up to 5 full-time apprentices and as many part-time pre-apprentices as possible to bring the total number to 8. The other aspect of the program the Board agreed on was that the wage subsidy would not to exceed \$6,000 per student over a 6-month period and the pre-apprentice would be registered with DOL. Mr. Harrity moved to amend the budget, to include pre-apprenticeships. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pihl. Motion passed unanimously.

7. **Young Manufacturing Talent Pipeline** – Mr. Harrity presented the Committee’s draft RFI, post-dated for December 15, 2016. He noted that the RFI would provide a broad base of potential vendors to explore strategy options. Mr Harrity advised the group that it would be a competitive process and OPM’s Procurement Standards Process would be used. He stated that proposals would be rated and ranked thus a MIF Evaluation Committee would need to be established. He also reviewed the proposed timeline for meeting milestones and advised that Carmen Molina-Rios would be the point of contact. Following subsequent discussion, Commissioner Smith asked for volunteers to serve on the Evaluation Committee. Beverlee Dacey, Commissioner Scott and John Harrity volunteered. Mr. Harrity then moved that the Board accept the draft RFI letter. The motion was seconded Mr. **Cooper**. Motion passed unanimously.
8. **Other Business** – None.
9. **Next Meeting** – Motion to accept the “2017 Meeting Schedule for the Advisory Board” by John Harrity. **Mr. Zoldy** seconded. However, further discussion by the board revealed that Tuesdays was not the best day of the week. Commissioner Smith asked that staff work to revise the schedule and represented at the next meeting. The Board did agree that the next board meeting could be held on January 10, 2017.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.